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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002076

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Trafficking in Persons: HRDF Reports Recent Developments

- (1) SUMMARY: In April 9 discussions with emboff, Dr. Demet Gural, executive director of Turkey's Human Rights Development Foundation (HRDF), reported 1) specific case implementation of the September 2003 MOI-HRDF Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking protocol (para 10), 2) confirmed HRDF access to police detention centers, and 3) ongoing law enforcement training as evidence the GOT is cooperating with HRDF to assist victims of human trafficking. Gural noted that, despite the momentum, funding shortages severely limit HRDF effectiveness. END SUMMARY.

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PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTED, VICTIMS REPATRIATED  
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- (2) Citing TIP action in Istanbul, HRDF Executive Director Dr. Demet Gural told emboff that police are implementing terms of the September 2003 human trafficking protocol signed by HRDF and the MOI General Directorate of Security. According to Gural, two Moldavian women were taken into custody on April 7 in Yalova and Silivri. Istanbul police, she said, screened the two women, determined they were victims of trafficking, and, in the absence of shelter facilities, transported them to HRDF's office for further evaluation. Police held one woman in an Istanbul detention center (HRDF was permitted to visit her). Police provided the second woman with a free-of-charge hotel room while HRDF coordinated with the International Organization for Migration to repatriate the victims.
- (3) Regina Boucault, IOM Chief of Mission in Turkey, noted MOI officials immediately granted IOM staff access to secure areas of Istanbul's Ataturk Airport to escort the victims to their flights. Following standard IOM repatriation procedures, IOM Turkey notified IOM Moldova. Moldova confirmed the victims' arrival last night, April 8, 2004.

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MOI GUARANTEES HRDF ACCESS TO DETENTION CENTERS  
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- (4) In October 2003, Istanbul Police invited Dr. Gural and other representatives from HRDF to tour police detention facilities. At that time, Gural asserts, police told her "HRDF can visit this center at any time." Gural, however, finds it more convenient for police to bring potential victims to her office.
- (5) Gural also noted that, in previous repatriation cases in Antalya and Kusadasi, police officials invited HRDF staff to visit women in their custody. According to Gural however, "due to lack of funds, we could not visit these women".

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NEW INITIATIVES  
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- (6) HRDF, Gural says, is actively pursuing two major initiatives: 1) donors and development funds to establish a shelter for victims of trafficking, and 2) a framework for social services to trafficking victims. Because funds are unavailable, HRDF provides these services on a case-by-case basis when staff is available at its already-established refugee/illegal immigrant services office in Istanbul.

- (7) HRDF, according to Gural, is also emphasizing the importance of strengthening international NGO networks. A proposal submitted to the European Commission in January 2004 would provide HRDF funding for networking activities. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Bulgaria provided some support to HRDF to improve the NGO networking between Bulgarian and Turkish NGOs.

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TRAINING PAYS OFF  
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- (8) According to Gural, beginning January 2004, HRDF initiated several new training programs for police officers assigned to local Foreigners and Public Order departments. Gural noted that the European Commission and British Embassy provided funds, with technical assistance provided by IOM. Officers in Ankara, Izmir, Erzurum, Antalya and Samsun have already participated. Local Chambers of Commerce provide free space and catering for the three-day trainings in some cities.
- (9) Gural noted HRDF has trained eighty MOJ officials in human trafficking issues. Forty were trained in January 2004. Programs focus on differences in International Legal Definitions of TIP Crimes and Migrant Smuggling; Human Trafficking Causes, Actors, Mechanisms, and Consequences; Violation of Human Rights; IOM Activities in Counter Trafficking; Case Studies; Identification of Trafficked Victims; Treatment of Traffic Victims; TIP Conditions in Turkey; Best Practices for Treatment of Victims; Treatment of Victims as Witnesses; Investigation Methods and Techniques; and Intelligence on Trafficking.

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TEXT OF PROTOCOL  
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- (10) Signed on September 3, 2003, the MOI-HRDF Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking protocol enumerates the following goals. Begin Text:

HRDF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To establish a network among non-governmental organizations in Turkey and regional countries affected by human trafficking;
2. To provide training for government officers to refresh and consolidate on the recent amendments of Turkish Penal Code and the standards of international legislations on human trafficking;
3. To advocate for the amendments in Turkish Penal Code required by the standards set by the international legislations;
4. To execute activities in order to strengthen the capacity of Turkish NGOs for the promotion of human rights in Turkey including the rights of trafficked persons and sex workers;
5. To establish a counseling center which will provide psychological, health and legal services for trafficked victims;
6. To provide a shelter for the victims, within the framework of the procedures and fundamentals set by the Ministry of Interior, concerning temporary residence permit and staying in Turkey;
7. To provide a shelter for human trafficking victims;
8. To develop and distribute information, education and communication materials to inform the public, related institutions and the victims about human trafficking;

- ¶9. To evaluate the demands of collaboration and support of international non-governmental organizations working in this field, such as the International Office of Migration (IOM) and to inform the said organizations about the activities and present implementations of Turkey in this field.

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ¶1. To support the HRDF for the national and international efforts detailed below and future necessities about combating human trafficking in Turkey and in the region;
- ¶2. To inform the HRDF when a victim of human trafficking is arrested or during his/her investigation, trial, house arrest or before s/he is deported and to facilitate interview process of the HRDF representatives with the victims. To assist the mentioned victims to take advantage of the health and legal services that will be provided by HRDF;
- ¶3. To provide the victims of human trafficking to take utmost advantage of the counselling and shelter units, established by HRDF;
- ¶4. To provide collaboration of the units, established by HRDF, with the related non-governmental organizations in the countries of the victims of human trafficking before they are deported. To provide the security of human trafficking victims' transportation operations that will be supported by the funds received;
- ¶5. To provide the security of counselling and shelter units established by HRDF and the staff working in the programme;
- ¶6. To evaluate the denunciations on human trafficking issued from the regional countries as an outcome of the network established by HRDF; to carry out the denunciation by the mediation of the units, established by HRDF;
- ¶7. To provide trainers for the trainings about Turkish and international laws and regulations on human trafficking that will be organized by HRDF experts and also to enhance the participation of the police officers, who are in need of these trainings;
- ¶8. To participate in the national and international monitoring and evaluation activities of the programme that will be developed;
- ¶9. To support the communication of the staff working in the units established by HRDF with the police officers working in the departments of Public Security and Foreigners, and to facilitate the access of the staff in these departments. END TEXT.

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